

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the present application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remains under examination in the application are presented below. The claims are presented in ascending order and each includes one status identifier. Those claims not cancelled or withdrawn but amended by the current amendment utilize the following notations for amendment: 1. deleted matter is shown by strikethrough for six or more characters and double brackets for five or less characters; and 2. added matter is shown by underlining.

1. (Currently Amended) A self-propelled operator-carrying vehicular sod laying machine for supporting, transporting, placing and unrolling sod rolls upon a surface comprising:

a frame having a forward end, a rearward end, a left side, and a right side;

a plurality of wheels mounted to the frame for rolling transport of the frame along a surface, a front wheel being located proximate the forward end at the right side, a front wheel being located proximate the forward end at the left side and at least one rear idler caster wheel being located assembly affixed proximate the frame rearward end;

a pair of generally parallel, laterally displaceable elongated arms disposed between the front wheels and extending forwardly from the frame forward end, each of the arms having a roll end and a pivot end, the pivot end being pivotably attached to the frame to pivot on an axis parallel to the axis of the front wheels to cause vertical displacement of the roll end of the arms, the lateral displacement between the arms being variable to operator-selectable distances by operator actuation of a vehicle-powered means for lateral simultaneous movement of one arm together with a left box frame and means for lateral simultaneous movement of the other arm with a right box frame and a front drive wheel being affixed to each box frame.

A sod roll supporting shaft attachable to the roll ends of the arms; and

A drive system for pivoting the arms, varying the lateral displacement of the arms and rotating the front wheels.

2. (Previously Presented) The sod laying machine defined in claim 1, further comprising an operator control station proximate the forward end of the frame, the control station including controls for pivoting the arms for vertical movement of the forward ends, controls for lateral movement of the arms to vary the distance between the arms and controls for the speed and direction of the wheel rotating drive system.

3. (Previously Presented) The sod laying machine defined in claim 2, wherein the operator control station is further comprised of an operator-carrying seat.
4. (Previously Presented) The sod laying machine defined in claim 3, further comprising hydraulic drive means for laterally displacing the arms to accommodate a plurality of sod roll widths.
5. (Previously Presented) The sod laying machine defined in claim 4, wherein the drive means for pivoting the arms is comprised of a hydraulic cylinder.
6. (Previously Presented) The sod laying machine defined in claim 4, wherein the drive means for rotating the wheels is comprised of independently controllable hydraulic motors rotatably attached to the front wheels.
7. (Currently Amended) A self-propelled operator-carrying vehicular sod laying machine for supporting, transporting, placing and unrolling sod rolls upon a surface comprising:
 - a frame having a forward end, a rearward end, a left side and a right side;
 - a plurality of wheels mounted to the frame for rolling transport of the frame along a surface, a front wheel being located proximate the forward end at the right side, a front wheel being located proximate the forward end at the left side, and at least one rear idler caster wheel ~~being located proximate the rearward end~~ affixed proximate the frame rearward end;
 - a pair of generally parallel, laterally displaceable elongated arms disposed between the front wheels and extending forwardly from the frame forward end, each of the arms having a roll end and a pivot end, the pivot end being pivotably attached to the frame to pivot on an axis parallel to the axis of the front wheels to cause vertical displacement of the roll end of the arms;

a sod roll supporting shaft attachable to the roll ends of the arms;
a hydraulic drive system for laterally displacing the arms;
a hydraulic actuator for pivoting the arms;
a left drive wheel hydraulic drive motor rotatably linked exclusively to the left front wheel;
a right drive wheel hydraulic drive motor rotatably linked exclusively to the right front wheel; and

an operator control station proximate the forward end of the frame, the control station including controls for pivoting the arms for vertical movement of the forward ends, controls for lateral movement of the arms to vary the distance between the arms, controls for independently controlling the speed and direction of rotation of each drive wheel and an operator-carrying seat.

8. (Previously Presented) The sod laying machine defined in claim 7, wherein the drive means for rotating the wheels is continuously variable speed hydraulic motors.

9. (Currently Amended) The sod laying machine defined in claim 8, wherein ~~the each rear wheel~~ each rear wheel is further comprised of an idler caster wheel assembly.

10. (Previously Presented) The sod laying machine defined in claim 9, wherein the drive means for rotating the wheels has a multiplicity of drive speeds including higher speeds for sod roll transport and lower speeds for sod roll placement.

11. (Previously Presented) The sod laying machine of claim 8, wherein the drive means for rotating the wheels has a multiplicity of drive speeds including higher speeds for sod roll transport and lower speeds for sod roll placement.

12. (Currently Amended) The sod laying machine defined in claim 7, ~~wherein the rear wheels are idler-caster wheels~~ further comprising at least two rear wheels that are idler-caster wheels.

13. (Previously Presented) The sod laying machine of claim 12, wherein the drive means for rotating the wheels has a multiplicity of drive speeds including higher speeds for sod roll transport and lower speeds for sod roll placement.

14. (Currently Amended) The sod laying machine of claim 13, wherein ~~the drive wheels are the left drive wheel~~ is rotatably affixed to a left box frame member that extends forwardly from the frame member and the right drive wheel is rotatably affixed to a right box frame member, the box frame members extending forward from the frame, and each box frame member being linked to an arm so that the distance between the drive wheels and the distance between the arms may be varied simultaneously by actuating of a single hydraulic cylinder.

15. (Previously Presented) The sod laying machine of claim 14, wherein a fluid tank is formed within a box frame member.

16. (Currently Amended) A method for making a self-propelled, operator-carrying vehicular sod laying machine for supporting, transporting, placing and unrolling sod rolls upon a surface comprising the scope of:

forming a frame having a forward end, a rearward end, a left side and a right side;

rotatably mounting a plurality of wheels to the frame for rolling transport of the frame along a surface, a front wheel being located proximate the forward end at the right side, a front wheel being located proximate the forward end at the left side and at least one rear wheel being located proximate the rearward end;

forming a pair of elongated arms, each with a roll end and a pivot end,

pivotably mounting to the frame, the pair of generally parallel, laterally displaceable, spaced-apart, elongated arms between the front wheels and extending each of the arms forwardly from the frame forward end, the pivot being pivotable on an axis parallel to the axis of the front wheels to cause vertical displacement of the roll end of the arms;

removeably attaching a sod roll supporting shaft to the roll ends of the arms;

operably attaching a hydraulic actuator for laterally displacing the arms;

operably attaching a hydraulic actuator for pivoting the arms;

installing a left drive wheel hydraulic drive motor rotatably linked exclusively to the left front wheel;

installing a right drive wheel hydraulic drive motor rotatably linked exclusively to the left front wheel;

installing an operator control station proximate the forward end of the frame, the control station including controls for pivoting the arms for vertical movement of the forward ends, controls for lateral movement of the arms to vary the distance between the arms, controls for independently controlling the speed and direction of rotation of each drive wheel, and an operator-carrying seat; and

linking the box beam members to which the drive wheel assemblies are attached so as to adjust the separation between the front drive wheels simultaneously with adjustment of the arm spacing.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, further comprising the step of installing continuously variable speed hydraulic front wheel drive motors.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, further comprising the step of installing an idler caster wheel at the rearward portion of the frame.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 18, further comprising the step of installing a ~~transverse rocking beam pivotable on the medial frame forward-rearward axis and placing a ground-contacting idler caster wheel at each end of the rocking beam~~ rear wheel rocking beam fitted with a ground-contacting idler caster wheel assembly proximate each end, the rocking beam being pivotable on an axis generally perpendicular to the axis of the front wheels to facilitate vertical displacement of the rear wheels.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19, further comprising the step of installing wide floatation tires at the front driving wheels.